

## Message Text

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21

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 /078 W

----- 119199

R 010546Z MAY 75

FM AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2720

INFO AMCONSUL BRISBANE BY POUCH

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL PERTH BY POUCH

AMCONSUL SYDNEY

CINCPAC

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

USOECN PARIS

USNATO BRUSSELS 02

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E O 11652 N A

TAGS: PINT, AS

SUBJ: MENZIES COMMENTS ON VIETNAM FALL

1. I SAW SIR ROBERT MENZIES APRIL 30 TO FIX FIRM APPOINTMENT FOR HIM TO SEE AMBASSADOR GREEN MAY 6. MENZIES WAS PLEASED AT PROSPECT OF DISCUSSION WITH AMBASSADOR AND WAS MOST COMPLIMENTARY REGARDING WAY AMBASSADOR HAS HANDLED HIMSELF IN AUSTRALIA QTE UNDER VERY DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES. UNQTE HE SAID IT WAS VERY FORTUNATE THAT US HAD SENT QTE A REAL PROFESSIONAL UNQTE AS ITS REPRESENTATIVE DURING THIS DIFFICULT TIME.

2. COMMENTING ON SURRENDER OF SAIGON, MENZIES OBSERVED THAT THAIS WERE ALREADY CHANGING THEIR POSITION, THAT LEE KWAN YEW  
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CLEARLY FEELS HIMSELF EXPOSED AND MENACED AND THAT SITUATION IN

INDONESIA WAS UNPREDICTABLE. QTE IF SUKARNO WERE STILL  
IN POWER INDONESIA WOULD BE GONE. I DON'T KNOW WHETHER SUHARTO  
WILL BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN INDONESIA FREE FROM COMMUNIST  
DOMINATION. UNQTE

3. IN HIS OPINION AUSTRALIA TODAY IS IN QTE AS DANGEROUS A  
SITUATION AS ANY IN ITS HISTORY UNQTE. AND WITH THE CONFUSED  
POLICIES OF THE CURRENT LABOR GOVERNMENT HE DID NOT EXPECT ANY  
REALISTIC FACING UP TO CURRENT DANGERS.

4. MENZIES SAID SOMBERLY THAT IN HIS OPINION THE BASIC LESSON  
OF VIETNAM WAS THAT QTE DEMOCRACIES ARE UNABLE TO WAGE A  
PROLONGED WAR AGAINST A FANATICALLY DETERMINED OPPONENT UNQTE.  
PRESS, TELEVISION AND SELF-APPOINTED INTELLECTUALS WERE ABLE TO  
UNDERMINE THE DETERMINATION OF THE PEOPLE AND BLUR THE BASIC  
PROBLEMS IN THE PUBLIC MIND BY WISHFUL THINKING AND CONSTANT  
EMPHASIS ON SECONDARY ISSUES. OVER TIME THE PUBLIC BECAME  
CONFUSED AND WEARY TO THE POINT THAT MAJOR DISASTERS COULD  
FINALLY BE PRESENTED AS RELATIVELY MINOR EVENTS.

5. MENZIES WAS VERY WORRIED AS TO HOW THE US WOULD REACT TO  
THE COMMUNIST TAKEOVER OF INDO-CHINA. AS A FORMER GOVERNMENT  
LEADER HE SYMPATHIZED WITH PRESIDENT FORD AND WISHED HIM WELL.  
HOWEVER, NOTHING WOULD BE CLEAR IN THE US UNTIL AFTER THE  
1976 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS. IN AUSTRALIA HE WELCOMED  
MALCOLM FRASER'S SELECTION AS THE NEW OPPOSITION LEADER AND  
BELIEVED THAT HE WAS ALREADY DOING A SPLENDID JOB OF REUNITING  
THE OPPOSITION AND PROPERLY EMPHASIZING TO THE PEOPLE THE  
MANY MISTAKES OF THE WHITLAM GOVERNMENT.  
BRAND

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